



February 7, 2007

Legislative Digest

H.Res. 131 – Recognizing and honoring the lifetime contributions of Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart on the dedication of the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall at the Florida International University College of Law.

Floor Situation

H.Res. 131 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Kendrick Meek (D-FL) on February 6, 2007. This bill has not been considered by any committee in the 110th Congress.

H.Res. 131 is expected to be considered on February 7, 2007.

Summary

H.Res. 131 resolves that the House of Representatives honors the lifetime accomplishments and legacy of Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart for his numerous contributions to democracy, and recognizes the Florida International University dedication of the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall at the College of Law as an appropriate tribute in his memory.

Background

Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart was a native of Santiago de Cuba, and completed his studies at the University of Havana with a law degree in 1919. Soon after joining the Bar, Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart became a municipal judge in the city of Palma Soriano, where he served with distinction for four years until, by civil service examination, he obtained the post of civil law notary in the town of Banes in eastern Cuba.

While maintaining his law practice, Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart was elected City Council President and Mayor of Banes, Cuba. He was later elected Congressman and transferred his law practice to the city of Holguin and subsequently to Havana, where he founded the law firm of Diaz-Balart, Diaz-Balart and Amador, with his son, Rafael Lincoln, and Rolando Amador. Years later, also by examination, Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart assumed the post of Land Registrar, a prominent achievement for lawyers in many civil law countries, including Cuba.

Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart lived in exile after 1959, and became a proud citizen of the United States. Along with his son, Rafael Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart commenced law school at the University of Madrid, Spain, and in 1965, at age 66, earned a second Law Degree. Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart died in Miami, Florida in 1985. Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart instilled not only in his son, but in his four grandsons a sense of honor and service, which led them to become prominent members of American society.

Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart's son, Rafael Lincoln, was a prominent member of the Cuban House of Representatives, and his grandsons, Lincoln Diaz-Balart and Mario Diaz-Balart were elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1992 and 2002, respectively. Jose Diaz Balart became a prominent journalist as the Washington bureau chief for Telemundo Network and was the first United States journalist to host daily Spanish and English language newscasts, and Rafael Diaz-Balart became a prominent Miami investment banker.

On February 10, 2007, Florida International University will dedicate the Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall as the new home of the College of Law. Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall will provide a state-of-the-art facility for teaching, research, and study, as well as scholarly and social interaction. The Rafael Diaz-Balart Hall was designed by the internationally renowned architect Robert A. M. Stern, Dean of the School of Architecture at Yale University.

Additional Information

[Florida International University College of Law Biography on Rafael Jose Diaz-Balart](#)

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